

ACORN

The Journal of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario



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ACORN

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Contents

From the Editor	3
President's Message	3
Introducing the ACO's New General Manager:	
Dianna Cook	4
The ACO Goes to Perth	5
A Tribute to Tony	7
Historic Willowbank Saved	9
Alliston Landmark Reborn as	
Arts And Cultural Centre	12
Designating The Cockshutt Buildings	13
Lost Buildings Report	14

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Cover: Willowbank, Queeeston, showing the east or river façade

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From the Editor

In June I was fortunate to attend a lecture in Toronto by Anthony Tung, an American preservationist and author of *Preserving the World's Great Cities: The Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis*. Tung spoke with great feeling and eloquence about his travels to 22 cities to study how architectural preservation worked and failed in some of the most artistically and historically significant places around the globe. These cities included Rome, Paris, Amsterdam, Vienna, Warsaw, Moscow, Beijing, Singapore and New York. "I set out to learn how different people in different places conserved their urban heritage", Tung writes, "but I discovered instead a tragedy of history: I learned that during the twentieth century not only has modern civilization destroyed much of the architectural fabric inherited from previous generations, creating a widening chasm between us and our past, but, worse, on every continent we have adopted a culture of destruction that presages further loss."

I hope to have a review of Tung's book in the next issue of ACORN.

In the introduction to *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, Anthony Tung pays tribute to the pioneers of architectural preservation around the world: "I must acknowledge an important historical element: intellectual honor – the honor of a great artist and architect of the Italian Renaissance who challenged a pope in regard to practices that resulted in destruction of the ancient monuments of Rome; the honor of a respected Roman academic who refused to sanction the ruinous urban renewal policies of a Fascist dictator; and the honor of Russian city planners who registered their dissent in opposition to Communist plans to modernize Moscow by cutting roads unnecessarily through the heart of the historic cityscape. Posterity is indebted to these people and others like them who, at critical historic junctures, recorded for following generations that there were options to the

common wisdom of the time: that alternatives to self-inflicted destruction were available.... It is through such dissent that we can trace the evolution of an ethic of urban architectural conservation."

In the evolution of the preservation ethic in our own province, few rank with Anthony Adamson. Tony, the last surviving founder of the ACO in 1933, died on May 3, 2002 at the age of 95. Among other preservation efforts, Tony helped oversee the restoration of Hamilton's Dundurn Castle and was the prime mover in the creation of Upper Canada Village. He also played a role in the campaigns to save Toronto's Old City Hall and Union Station and, less successfully, the Provincial Asylum.

In their landmark work, *The Ancestral Roof*, in the chapter on Classical Revival architecture, Marion Macrae and Tony Adamson identified what they called "the noblest Romans of them all." Queenston's 1834 Willowbank is among them. That such a structure could be threatened in our own day defies belief. Almost as incredible is the fairy tale-like saving of this magnificent house. The story is told in this issue.

Dan Schneider



President's Message

The best times in any new position are frequently the day you start and the day you finish. There's usually a big dip in the middle as you learn the ropes and then pull things together for the run to the finish.

Unhappily, I've managed to miss the first high point of this presidency which would have been at the AGM at the conference in Perth (which all who attended have indicated a great success – thanks to John Stewart of Perth and all of his helpers). This was by virtue of a nasty concussion I received a few days earlier. Yes (to those who were there), that was me at the conference until noon on the Saturday; but being, by all accounts, as

grey as my hair, prudence dictated my departure home to bed in Cobourg before I could attend the AGM.

My apologies to all who missed the opportunity to congratulate (or vilify!) me on the Sunday and to Pat Malicki to whom I was intending to extend great praise for her wonderfully competent guidance of the ACO during her term as President (thanks Pat!). The one consolation is that by starting my presidency at the bottom (as it were), the only possible direction is up!

Conservation in Ontario is at the cross-roads of what may be an extremely exciting era. The recent success of "Doors Open" in various communities across the province has demonstrated, to politicians particularly, that there is a great hunger among the people of Ontario for an understanding of their culture as embodied in the rich forms of their built heritage. At the federal level, legislation is moving ahead to provide a national list of historic sites and possible tax breaks for restoration (which similar legislation, over a decade ago in the US, promoted an explosion in heritage conservation). This awakening puts a positive spin on the desires of those of us who have fought for decades for the preservation of the built and natural fabric of this province.

Changes in attitudes at the grassroots level also put the lie to the rather cavalier attitude of those who support the forces of demolition contrary to the preservation of key historic sites. It is those sites that are the very places which define us as a unique place in North America. The travesty that is the surrounding of Fort

York with inappropriate development is an example. It has been promoted by a decades-old attitude of both local planning agencies and the OMB in permitting the trashing (by virtue of a screen of high-rise towers between the fort and the lake as well as the earlier erection of the Gardiner Expressway) of what is arguably one of the most important battle sites in Canada.

Such a situation must finally lead to the population standing up and saying "enough!" Perhaps the changes at Queen's Park will move Ontario in a new direction. However, recent events remind me of the scene in a recent movie filmed in Newfoundland (The Shipping News) where the ashes of a reviled deceased are spirited away, dumped in the outhouse and then dumped on as a final degradation. Needless to say, Fort York has figuratively played the part of those ashes despite its importance to the history of Upper Canada.

Since the 1930s, members of the ACO have been at the forefront of the movement to save our heritage. We now find ourselves as one of a number of heritage-related organizations, many of which speak with separate voices. Over the next while we must begin to change and to coalesce these organizations so that they speak with one voice. I hope that we can collaborate in the development of a linked heritage web-site that will allow the various organizations in the province to speak with each other and with one voice on various issues as they arise.

We also hope to expand and enhance our advisory service for heritage sites,

and our HALP service. These are areas in which the ACO, as a provincial body, can directly influence the preservation of buildings at risk. Locally, of course, we rely on all of our dedicated members to fight in the trenches for our heritage properties. I hope to visit all of our branches over the next year to meet with members and hear first-hand what our organization can do to preserve and enhance our cultural sites.

I would like to welcome Dianna Cook as General Manager of the organization. She has wonderful credentials and will be actively involved in improving our bottom line to allow us the resources to pursue our goals into the future. I would also like to extend our deepest appreciation to Mike Forzley, who has recently had to remove himself from the position of Treasurer due to personal obligations. He has singularly helped the ACO improve its operations and provided us with a solid base to move ahead. We are looking for a replacement and would welcome a volunteer!

Phil Carter is stepping down after four years as Chairman of the Advisory Board. Thanks, Phil, for a job well done!

I'm looking forward to the coming two years with both trepidation and excitement. Please don't hesitate to let me know what we can do to promote our cause around the province.

Christopher Borgal

Introducing the ACO's New General Manager: Dianna Cook

After many years as an award-winning producer, writer, and manager of broadcast documentary and dramatic film and video in non-profit sector employment, as an independent contractor, as a business owner and as a general manager with two Canadian professional symphony orchestras, Dianna Cook, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's new General Man-

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ager, is clearly qualified to lead its operations.

As the in-house producer for the Public Legal Education Society in Vancouver, B.C., Dianna researched, scripted, produced, and directed over 35 half-hour broadcast-quality educational documentaries and docudramas that were aired on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and on B.C.'s Knowledge Network as its first locally produced series. As an independent producer she initiated the production of a variety of video programs for provincial and federal government projects, as well as for corporate and service organizations. She was responsible for all aspects of production and post-production from creative conception and development to management and completion and for developing provincial and national television distribution.

While general manager of the Okanagan Symphony and three years later of the Victoria Symphony, Dianna undertook the day-to-day management of all operating, administrative, production, and financial aspects of these organizations. Operating with a budget of \$800,000, the Okanagan Symphony performed nine seasonal concert weekends in four different communities to which it traveled. It also produced children's and special concerts, contracted out its services to big-name entertainment, opened its dress rehearsals to the public, presented lectures, and organized an annual fundraising gala. The Victoria Symphony, one of Canada's 13 major orchestras, operated with a budget of \$2.5 M. It produced 58 main-series concerts, a two-week long summer music festival, tours, and a children's series. It also provided services to

Pacific Opera Victoria and annually organized a major North American fundraising event which drew an audience of more than 40,000.

Dianna was a vigorous advocate of the Okanagan Symphony and while managing the institution improved its way of



doing business with the community and with its audiences and refined its image. After almost a decade of accumulating deficits, by her third season with the symphony it had posted an operating surplus for two consecutive years, successfully reducing the debt by 81% without sacrificing artistic quality! While with the Victoria Symphony,

Dianna enjoyed consistent commendation for all her activities ranging from redesign of marketing collateral, administrative restructuring, and development plans to concert stage announcements. At the end of the year prior to her arrival, the symphony posted an operating deficit of approximately \$75,000; Dianna successfully ended the year with a healthy operating surplus and elimination of the debt.

Born in British Columbia enough and only very recently moving to Ontario, Dianna studied graphic design at UCLA and archaeology and physical geography at Simon Fraser University, played competitive soccer, hiked many of B.C.'s mountains and trails, built a West Coast wilderness island cabin reached by canoe, organized art gallery showings and canine competition and entertainment for the Pacific National Exhibition, and has taught and competed in canine sports with her favourite Border Collie, Deka. She likes to draw and to paint in oils and is an untalented but enthusiastic western rider, having participated in

high-mountain horseback guiding and cattle round-up.

What attracted Dianna to the position with the ACO? "I believe it is an organization poised for change. It has a 70 year history to build on, an expanding market niche, and a great opportunity to increase its profile in the province. As a newcomer to Ontario I feel privileged to be working in the area of provincial heritage. I have much to learn, but I'm confident that with my experience in organization building and the continuing dedication of its many volunteers the ACO will turn a well-deserved corner in time. I look forward to meeting as many of the friends of this institution as I can, especially at our upcoming fundraising dinner in November! We will be adding some new features this year including a musical quartet to enhance the dining experience and an exciting raffle prize."

Welcome Dianna!

The ACO Goes to Perth

On April 28 and 29, 2002 the annual conference and AGM were held in Perth, Ontario – for the first time in the history of the ACO! The conference theme was "Community Stewardship: An Engine for Renewal." About 100 people attended the weekend's activities.

Conference chair was John Stewart, a principal of Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. The historic Code's Mill was the setting for the conference, pre-conference workshops, annual general meeting and Saturday night banquet.

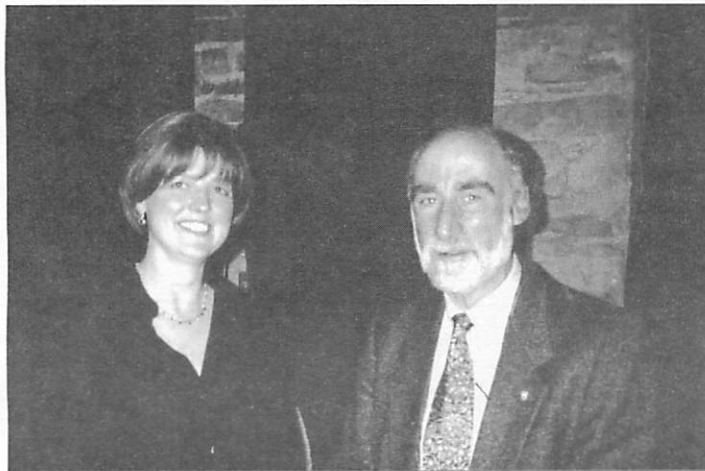
Highlights of the weekend were an inspiring keynote address by author Hal Kalman on the conference theme – Community Stewardship: An Engine for Renewal – and a wonderful banquet presentation Saturday evening by Canadian architect Douglas Cardinal. Pre-conference professional develop-



Code's Mill, site of the 2002 conference and AGM



Nina Chapple presents flowers to Pat Malicki at the Annual general Meeting



Sharon Vattay and Hal Kalman at the Saturday night banquet



Perth's Mayor Lana March and Conference Chair John Stewart at the Saturday morning session



The 1837 Haggart House, part of the Saturday walking tour.



Pat Malicki and Douglas Cardinal at the Saturday night banquet

Photos: Dan Schneider

ment workshops were held on Heritage Stone Carving and Successful Revitalization Approaches for Downtowns.

The opening reception Friday evening was held (simultaneously!) in two of Perth's finest vintage houses, the Matheson House, home of the Perth Museum, and the picturesque Inge Va, a property of the Ontario Heritage Foundation.

On Saturday, the morning began with a welcome from ACO President Pat Malicki, followed by an overview of community stewardship principles and practices by Perth Mayor Lana March. A common sentiment was that we should all have such enlightened politicians as Mayor March!

The day's presentations included:

- The Writings on the Walls! Youth and Revitalization, a discussion focusing on youth in our downtowns, and issues and opportunities for bringing the energy and ideas of our young people into revitalization initiatives
- Show and Tell: Restoration and Interpretation of our Architectural Heritage – Chris Tossell and Annie Dalton presented case studies from Sault Ste. Marie showing how interpreting and presenting our architectural heritage can contribute to enhancing tourism, while building local awareness and pride in a community's heritage assets
- Legacy in Stone: The Architectural Heritage of the Rideau – Community Conservation Efforts, an illustrated presentation on the Rideau Waterway Corridor by Barbara Humphreys
- Main Street Revised: Revitalization Strategies that Work, in which alumni of Heritage Canada's award-winning Main Street Program led a session on how a downtown can build upon initiatives such as Main Street, and carry on after "the circus has left town"
- All Fluff & No Stuff: Where to Turn When the Banks Don't Help, which looked at innovative financing strategies, including Ontario's new property tax incentive for heritage property, establishing a community foundation, and how a locally managed mortgage fund operates and supports downtown

commercial renovation/redevelopment projects

- Getting the Wheels Turning: Rehabilitating our Industrial Heritage, a workshop examining the complex challenges and opportunities for bringing our industrial heritage back to life, using The Renaissance Group's acclaimed historic cotton mill project in Cornwall and the former Brown Shoe Factory in Perth as examples
- Bringing Out the Best: Preparing and Responding to Disastrous Events, which discussed fire, ice storms, and other cataclysms and the strategies that need to be developed to safeguard our communities' built infrastructure, using Kelly's Flowers Building in Perth, site of a recent fire, as an example.

Saturday and Sunday tours included a walking tour of Perth, featuring such architectural gems as the Town Hall, the 1837 Haggart House, the Crystal Palace, and Inge Va; and a tour of the Algonquin College Heritage Institute, a highly successful program teaching preservation/restoration skills and techniques, and one of only four such programs in North America.

In a great show of support from Saturday night banquet goers, a silent auction raised over \$3,000 for a bursary fund for students at Algonquin College.

The brunch following Sunday's AGM included a presentation on the newly completed study on the loss of Ontario's heritage buildings (*see report in this issue*).

Congratulations to the ACO and conference organizers for a superb weekend. And for reminding us that Perth is a very special place!

Dan Schneider

A Tribute to Tony

Editor's Note: Anthony Adamson died on May 3, 2002. Among many other accomplishments, Tony helped found the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario in 1933 at the age of 26. The following is the eulogy delivered by Steve Otto at Tony's funeral.

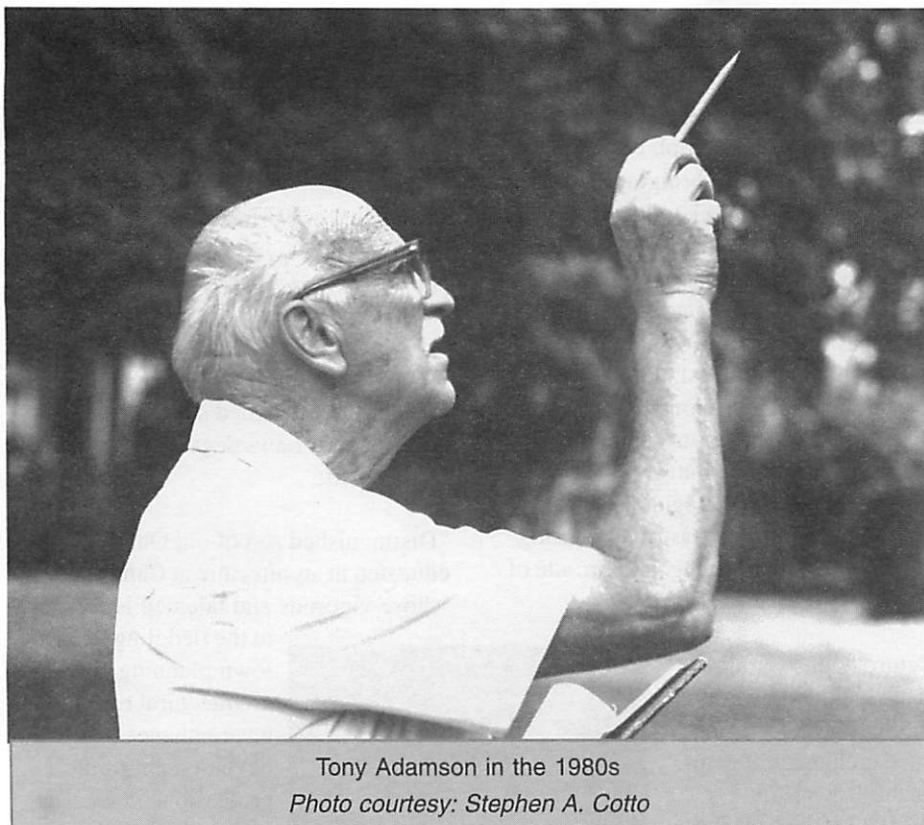
In May, 1975, Queen's University in Kingston awarded Tony an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. The citation read, in part:

"Distinguished son of old Ontario, educated in architecture at Cambridge, whose vigorous and talented leadership in the fledgling fields of town planning and architectural restoration have enhanced the development of these professions in Canada and made Canadians conscious and appreciative of the sense of identity to be discovered beneath the ancestral roof; admired by his students and colleagues as a teacher; by his readers as a vivid and persuasive writer; by his constituents in the Township of Toronto as a devoted public servant; and by all who value the Canadian heritage for his unrelenting efforts to recreate and preserve the best and to save from destruction much that remains unprotected from the ravages of progress."

He was then 69 years old, and I'm sure Queen's thought its award capped a career that was substantially completed. Since returning to full-time work after his illness, Tony had been a planning consultant, a professor of town planning at the University of Toronto, an elected official in the Township of Toronto, the moving force behind the creation of Upper Canada Village, a key consultant on the restoration of "Dundurn" at Hamilton, vice-chair of the National



Tony Adamson, circa 1975, in St. Paul's Church, Hamilton
Photo courtesy: S. A. Cotto



Tony Adamson in the 1980s
Photo courtesy: Stephen A. Cotto

Capital Commission, and chair of the Ontario Arts Council. *The Ancestral Roof*, a book he had written with Marion MacRae, had been published a dozen years before. On his own he had authored *The Gaiety of Gables*, which appeared in 1974, the same year he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada.

In fact, the university's doctoral hood fell on shoulders that were still hard-pressed to the wheel.

The Ontario Heritage Act had just been proclaimed and he was appointed to the Ontario Heritage Foundation, where he chaired its architectural conservation committee for its first six, critical years. *Hallowed Walls*, his second writing project with Marion, reached the book tables in time for Christmas, 1975, and was followed by *Cornerstones of Order* in 1983. His work in the preservation field was recognized by the City of Toronto's Award of Merit and Heritage Canada's Gabrielle Léger medal. Then in 1987, as proof that he had lost none of his touch, Tony penned *Wasps in the Attic*, a remarkable and intimate history of the people from whom he and Augusta were descended, and of their family together.

This week, in anticipation of today, I have been re-reading *Wasps in the Attic*, and finding delight again in a Tony's unmistakable voice. From the beginning he wrote well. Who else, aged fifteen, could have described so ingenuously his handling of an unexpected compliment from his house master at boarding school?

"I replied to humour him or soothe me, that I always had been from my youth up a splendid fellow and as for this term, well, of course, I did not want to brag or what-not but a new born lamb placed next to me would turn black in a few seconds."

And who but Tony, with his irrepressible sense of fun and of himself, could rise above the reasons for his confinement at Colorado Springs to describe for the readers of the RAIC *Journal* his introduction to a visiting Frank Lloyd Wright:

"'Excuse me, Mr. Wright, this is Mr. er ...' I gave my name. 'He is an architect too.' The lion turned slowly and looked. After a long moment he pursed his eyes into a most effective shape. 'When Greek

meets Greek,' he said, 'neither of them bring gifts.' I opened my mouth hoping for a *bon mot*, but it did not come and I sat down unobtrusively on a steel chair."

In *Wasps* he describes the opportunities that lay before him after he recovered from tuberculosis, and his decision to do things that were socially useful and in fields suited to his talents. On everyone's mind then was the need for reconstruction after the war. Although Tony began his teaching career by lecturing on the history of architecture, he gravitated into town planning and initiated its study at the University of Toronto. How lively his lectures must have been, especially those first thing in the morning illustrated by slides in a darkened room. Some students who had been up late the night before would go to sleep. On a signal from Tony, the projectionist would throw on the screen a slide from a collection of naughty pictures, and loud applause would waken the cat-nappers. But the kindly professor received as good as he gave. Sometimes he brought his dog, a retriever named Caesar, to class when the lady dogs at home were proving irresistible. After the lecture, when the lights came on, Caesar would be sitting in one of the seats at the back, placed there by the students, giving his full attention to the subject at hand.

Tony loved animals, something I believe he inherited from his grandmother and from his mother. When he was growing up at the Grove Farm they kept horses with names like Max, Climax, Anti-climax and Bar Sinister. There was even one called Holy City, a broken down plug rescued from the service of a Spadina Avenue scrap dealer. Almost all his life Tony had dogs and birds. When he was in municipal office and his opponents took him to task for the lot levies he introduced in Toronto Township, the first in the province, or the fluoride he caused to be put in the tap water, he taught his budgie to say the names of these rivals followed by "phszzt," the nearest thing to a raspberry the bird could manage. During the decade I lived under Tony and Gusta's roof at 23 Rosedale Road the menagerie consisted

of three cats, two named for Tony's great-uncles William and Arthur Elwell, and Whitey, the worst-tempered feline I've ever tried to pet, but who loved Tony. Whitey's visits to the veterinarian were preceded by leather-gloved searches under the beds, after which she would be wrapped in a towel, hissing and ready to take a chunk out of anyone who came near. As well, we had legions of "coonies" behind every bush and tree in the garden waiting for the handclap that announced peanuts were being handed out. A few blue jays completed the outdoors club.

The garden at 23 Rosedale Road was Tony's particular pride. When the house was sold and he found the new owner showing signs of appreciating the grounds as much as he had, he gave him the illustrated and meticulous journals he had kept for the garden. After that on several occasions Tony took up the invitation to visit and sit again among the roses, yews and azaleas he had moved there from Port Credit along with the columns rescued from William Cawthra's house. It gave him great pleasure.

Once I asked Tony what had attracted him to 23 Rosedale and he said it was the sight, as he drove up Avondale Road, of the ribbed Tudor-like ceiling in the drawing room. The house was very grand. Just before Augusta was to celebrate her 80th birthday she suggested a suitable present might be a car more fitting to their style of living than the Rambler that Tony had bought some years before because it was made at a factory in Peel County. Instead, her birthday present was a platform elevator that rose four storeys from the ground to a roof-deck. Most of the time it was quite reliable, but one summer weekend it failed ten feet short of the top, trapping the two of them. When no one heard their shouts Tony decided to climb the framework on which the platform travelled until he could slide out a window at deck-level. She insisted that he take off his trousers so as not to get them covered in dirt and grease. Once outside, he could not attract the attention of anyone on the ground below so

he clambered over the railing, down a sloping portion of the roof and in a third-floor window, where he was able to call the fire department. When I reproached him for risking his neck, his response was to say with that gleam in his eye all of us have seen, "I feel so macho!"

Reflecting upon his achievements Tony said that he thought Upper Canada Village and the books he wrote with Marion were the most satisfying, followed by his stint on the Ontario Arts Council. It is hard to disagree with his judgement which was always so clear-minded and yet, as I talk with people whose lives have been changed by knowing him, I wonder if he appreciated that this legacy was almost as important. Two examples will suffice. The first, a man who was smitten by one of Gusta's nieces but was unemployed owed his getting a job at the Stratford Festival that changed the course of his life to Tony who pulled some strings through the Arts Council. The second man, now high up in the movement to preserve the world's heritage, wrote from Rome on learning of Tony's death:

"Tony was an icon for me . . . proof that civility, integrity, honesty and enthusiasm did not have to be sacrificed to achieve something. I shall always feel very privileged to have known him, and hope I can keep his memory alive in a

small way by imitating some of the things he did so well."

Outside where Tony's ashes will be interred in a vault of his own design next to the remains of his beloved Augusta, his mother and father, you will see the words *Veterum non immemor* inscribed on the lintel. These come from the fifth book of the Aeneid, and are the motto of the Adamson family. Out of curiosity, and on your behalf, I wanted to know how the family rendered the Latin into English, so asked Adrian. His translation was a most happy one: "Don't forget the old guy."

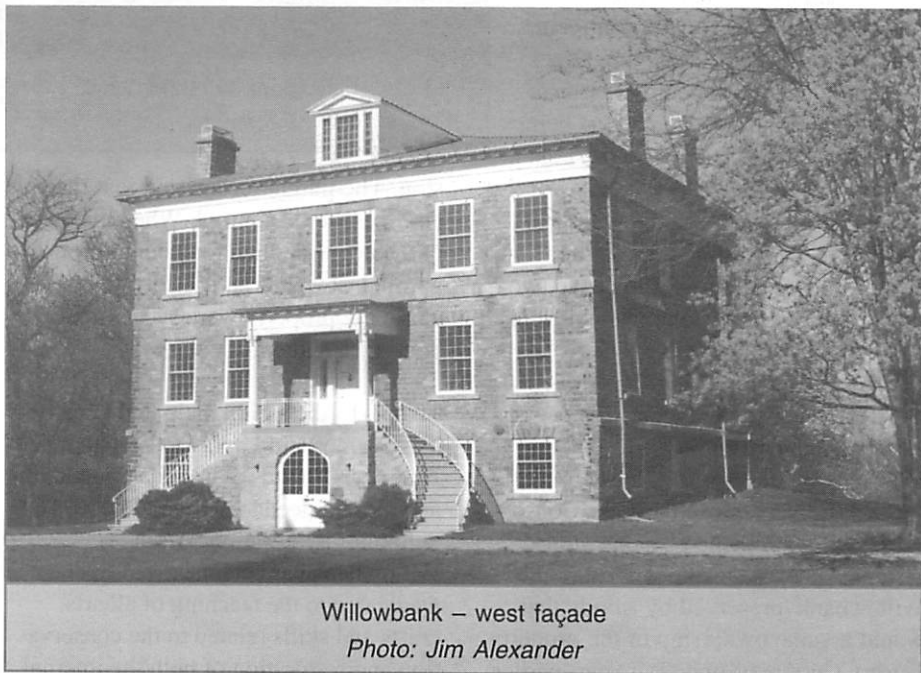
We won't forget you, Tony, we won't.

Stephen A. Otto

Steve Otto was a friend of Tony Adamson.

Historic Willowbank Saved

Three short months ago, Willowbank, one of North America's finest remaining examples of Greek Revival architecture, was slated for demolition. This extraordinary home built in 1834 for Alexander



Willowbank – west façade

Photo: Jim Alexander

Hamilton, sheriff of Niagara, at Queenston, Ontario, seemed destined to suffer the same fate as the city of Hamilton's Bellevue. (See *ACORN Winter 2001*)

This was not the first time that this magnificent building faced destruction. During the Fenian Raids, Caroline Emily Hamilton, daughter of Alexander Hamilton, wrote in a letter dated 1838, "House damaged by fire ... set on fire by retreating Rebels." It is an interesting aside to note that the city of Hamilton, home to the now-lost Bellevue, was named after the Honourable George Hamilton (1788-1836), Alexander's brother.

Willowbank had been for sale for years, and in the absence of any worthy use for the house that would preserve it, development, subdivision and the ultimate destruction of the building loomed. At one time home to the Bright Family, pioneers of the Canadian wine industry, it appeared that Willowbank had exhausted its appeals and that this superb Canadian landmark would be lost.

Willowbank is a stone mansion perched atop a steep embankment overlooking the Niagara River in the village of Queenston, now part of Niagara-on-the-Lake. It is celebrated as one of the finest examples of colonial Greek Revival architecture on the continent, and one of only three surviving Greek Revival houses designed by master builder John Latshaw (the others being Glencairn, also in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Ruthven in Cayuga). The view of the house from the centre of the village of Queenston is arresting. Across the front of the building stand eight majestic two-storey wooden Ionic columns (cut from tulip wood), their capitals exquisite examples of hand carving. The front doorway is considered a masterpiece of neo-classical design.

In 2001 the Niagara-on-the-Lake Conservancy was approached by potential buyers, Americans, who wished to see Willowbank preserved by a body that would assume ownership of the property in trust. Curiously, only four years earlier,

in 1998, the Conservancy had resolved that one of its long range goals would be to establish a school of restoration arts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The buyers were intrigued by the Conservancy's proposal for The School of Restoration Arts at Willowbank. The house would become a venue for teaching conservation and restoration skills and techniques in a working environment: while undergoing restoration it would serve as the classroom for the school.

Thus began the 16 month negotiations to purchase the estate's 12.5 acres, half of which had been severed and approved for development of a subdivi-



Willowbank – interior view
Photo: Jim Alexander

sion. The purchaser insisted that the entire estate be acquired. When the owner of the house applied for a demolition permit last year, frantic efforts to purchase the property were successful. The price: \$1.8 million.

Thanks to the vision, help and generosity of James and Laura Dodson, the American Friends of Canada Foundation, and a guaranteed loan for \$200,000, The School of Restoration Arts at Willowbank has become a reality. Dedicated to the teaching of all arts, crafts and skills related to the conservation and restoration of both the internal

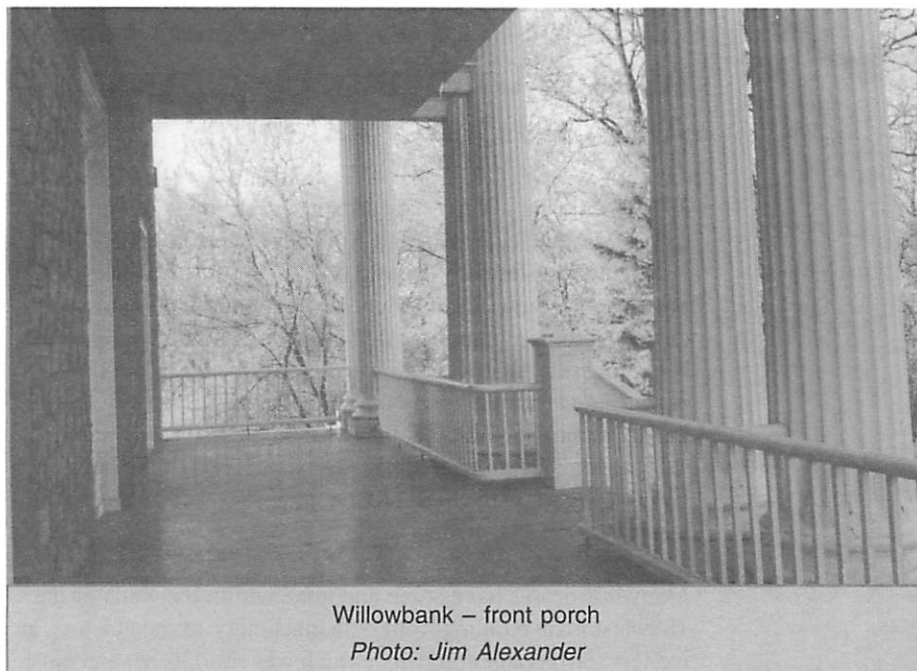
and external elements of heritage buildings, the school aims to become the premier source in North America of knowledge and expertise devoted to both the preservation and teaching of these traditional and threatened skills. Willowbank will be the first of the "building-cum-schools" and will serve as the school's headquarters after its restoration is complete. Another aim is that, in time, the school will become a heritage contractor.

During negotiations to purchase the property, the founding board for the school was established. It includes members from Niagara-on-the-Lake who represent various community and heritage associations. This board of volunteers has worked tirelessly to establish the framework for The School of Restoration Arts and The Willowbank Trust. Also of invaluable assistance is the commitment of many individuals willing to offer their expertise in the fields of restoration, conservation, and architectural preservation. There are also archaeologists, historians, master-craftspeople, librarians, furniture makers, interior designers, accountants and administrators.

The School's objectives include teaching conservation and restoration skills relating to landscape, gardens, fabrics, furnishings, books, pictures, rugs, ephemera and other internal and external elements of heritage buildings.

In addition to the teaching of these skills, the school has many other objectives and no doubt in time will discover other areas of preservation and restoration to be included in the curricula. These will include:

- Teaching the art of recording and salvaging elements of heritage buildings slated for demolition
- Exploring uses for heritage buildings to ensure their preservation.
- Pursuing the establishment of a National Trust and National Registry for heritage buildings
- Promoting public interest in restoration and conservation, and marketing these skills in the community
- Enhancing employment opportunities for



Willowbank – front porch
Photo: Jim Alexander

students learning these skills and establishing a skills base for others

- Restoring other historic buildings and sites as requested by their owners where funding permits
- Establishing a heritage and preservation award

Various methods of instruction will be employed, including master classes – hands-on sessions led by master craftspeople in which attendees will complete a restoration project and an apprenticeship program. Lectures, seminars and workshops will be offered for those interested in restoring or reproducing a heritage object.

In time, partnerships and associations will be pursued with government agencies, colleges, universities and secondary schools, The Niagara Parks Commission, Parks Canada and local unions, to present programs of study leading to recognized accreditation.

The house and lands of Willowbank will be restored, and the house refurnished as befits the status of the grand home it once was. It will remain open, where feasible, during restoration and when completed, will be available to the community for such uses as conferences, meetings, receptions and other special events. It will also serve as a repository of information, artifacts and

tools, serving as a library museum, archive and national registry related to restoration.

There will be three phases to the restoration.

Phase 1

- make the building safe and bring the structure “up-to-code,” including structural integrity, electrical service, heating, flooring and other areas in need of attention
- install washrooms, kitchen, offices and a reception area on the first floor
- install a “green” parking lot
- locate and reassemble old barns to be used for workshops and to provide storage areas
- maintain and conduct a botanical survey and inventory of the grounds
- begin archaeological surveys and conduct excavations at the site

- make the site available to the public as a venue to observe a restoration in progress and to participate, where possible

Phase 2

- carefully restore Willowbank, room by room
- furnish and decorate the rooms
- restore the gardens and landscaping
- encourage tourists and the general public to view the work in progress and to participate

Phase 3

- maintain the buildings, furnishings and grounds as a heritage trust
- establish Willowbank as a centre for research, assistance and host to related workshops
- use the building and grounds as a venue for private and public functions
- build Willowbank’s reputation as a tourist destination
- establish Willowbank as the headquarters for The School of Restoration Arts

Once Willowbank and its grounds are restored, another building in need of restoration will become the “school” for The School of Restoration Arts.

For more information, please write to: The School of Restoration Arts at Willowbank, P.O. Box 1582, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, L0S 1J0, phone (416) 468-8655 or e-mail willowbankschool@sympatico.ca.

Jack Sutherland with the assistance of Laura Dodson and Carol Nixon



****ACORN Deadline****

Fall Issue (includes branch reports!)

Monday, September 30, 2002

Contributors – please mark your calendars now!



BEFORE – the building “as found” in July 2001

Photo: Marilyn Holmstrom



DURING – the building under restoration in August 2001

Photo: Marilyn Holmstrom



AFTER – exterior near completion in January 2002

Photo: Marilyn Holmstrom

Alliston Landmark Reborn as Arts And Cultural Centre

The imaginations of the artistic and cultural communities of New Tecumseth and Area have been set on fire with the restoration of the old Gibson Co-op on Tupper Street in Alliston. Hundreds of volunteers are working towards the day when the singing of the bell in the tower will announce the beginning of a theatrical or musical performance in the 450-seat performing arts theatre. As the audience makes its way through the doors into the building, they will be greeted by a three-story atrium, a witness to the historical marvels of the building. Eyes will feast on the local artistic talents, as well as the local historical artifacts, on display.

Many businesses have come and gone within the walls of the 1889 historical building from farm machinery, to shoe factory, an ice-less refrigerator company (which was short lived) and most recently the Gibson Co-op. The many stories imbedded within the massive brick walls combine to provide the perfect atmosphere for the future Senior Centre, Art Centre and Performing Arts Theatre.

Organization, dedication and determination are key to the success of the future Gibson Community Arts and Cultural Centre, “The Cultural Heart of New Tecumseth and Area.” It is the Gibson Board, a small group of seven individuals, who are the driving force behind this project. These individuals, committed to the success of the building, deal on a daily basis with builders, contractors, architects, businesses, volunteers and funding.

Various committees work along with the Gibson Board to deal with separate issues of fundraising, volunteer recruitment, promotion and communications. The seniors in particular have proven to be real dynamos in raising funds and in putting in volunteer hours. Numerous smaller groups have also been busy holding auctions, giving performances, BBQs, and sales to raise the necessary funds.

The goal is to restore the 18,500 square foot building to above code standards, while assuring the historical integrity is maintained. Upon completion in three to four years, the building will provide 42,000 square feet, including a new addition housing the theatre. Every effort, including salvaging bricks for reuse, is being made to preserve the heritage of the building and its history in the community.

What makes this dream so unique and exciting is the hundreds of volunteers from so many various interests and backgrounds working together. A community of seniors, artists/artisans, musicians, authors, performing artists, and singers is supported by groups made up of farmers, teachers, business people, lawyers, doctors, nurses and on and on. This has become not only a dream come true but a wonderful opportunity to learn

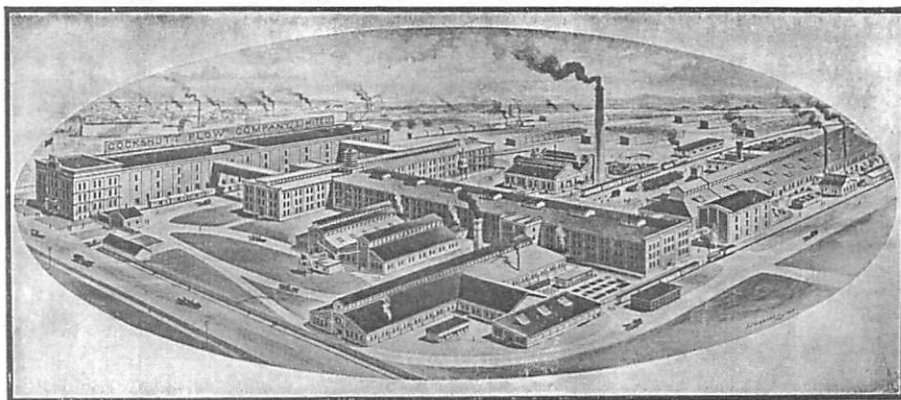
and share new ideas with other individuals and groups.

New Tecumseth and area has been given the opportunity to create a real jewel that will shine brightly, a symbol of a community's pride that will live far into the future.

JoAnne Hoftzyer

JoAnne Hoftzyer is a professional artist and one of the tireless volunteers involved in the creation of the Gibson Community Arts and Cultural Centre.

THE HOME OF COCKSHUTT IMPLEMENTS



BRANTFORD, CANADA

The Cockshutt factory complex circa 1910

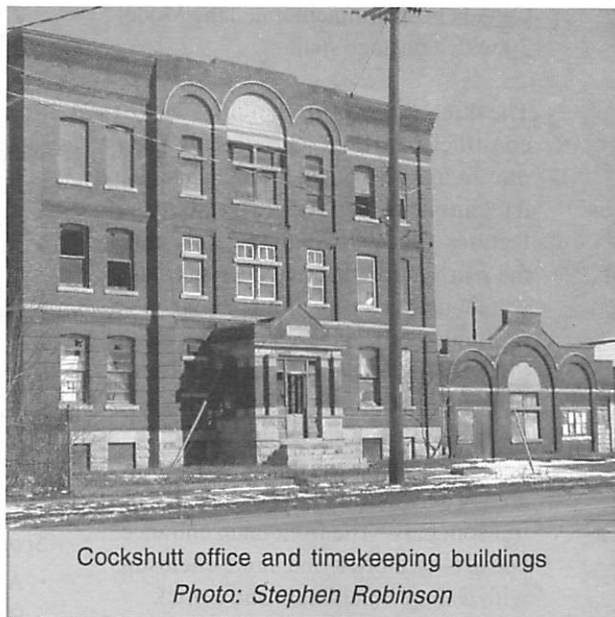
Designating The Cockshutt Buildings

On February 29, 2002, Ontario's Conservation Review Board held a hearing in the council chambers of Brantford City Hall to consider the proposed heritage designation of several old industrial structures that had served as the office and timekeeping buildings for the Cockshutt Plow Company manufacturing complex at 66 Mohawk Street in Brantford.

Much of this once thriving industrial complex, which had exported agricultural machinery across Canada and throughout the world, had deteriorated to the point that it had become a "brownfield" property that was delinquent in municipal taxes, mostly vacant, in poor structural condition and containing contaminated soils. As a result of a previous explosion and a tire fire, the property was under regular surveillance by fire prevention and property standards officers.

A demolition contractor, Mr. Bruce Dinsmore of Silver Lining Properties Inc., had purchased the demolition rights for most of the buildings on the property (including the former office and timekeeping buildings) for one dollar. Mr. Dinsmore was interested in salvaging valuable building materials. Aware that a local organization, the Canadian Indus-

trial Heritage Foundation, which had hosted a very successful Cockshutt Homecoming Festival and Exhibition in 2000, was interested in establishing an industrial museum in the former office and timekeeping buildings, the city issued a demolition permit for all buildings on the property except for these two.



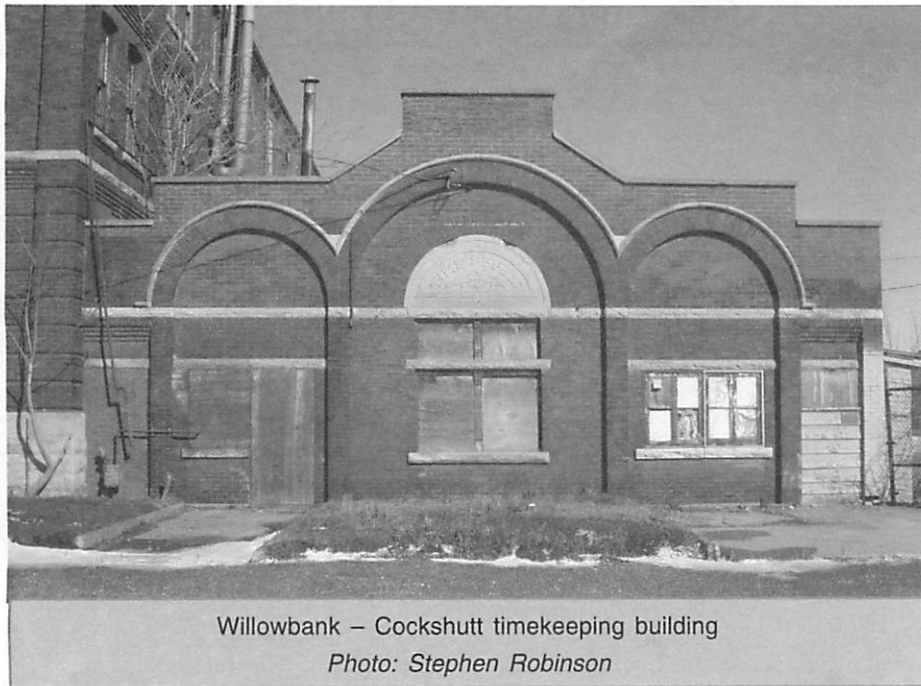
Cockshutt office and timekeeping buildings
Photo: Stephen Robinson

When it appeared that the contractor would request a demolition permit for the office and timekeeping buildings, as well, the city, at the request of the Canadian Industrial Heritage Foundation, passed a resolution, in June, 2001, to indicate its intention to designate these two build-

ings under the Ontario Heritage Act and served notice. This represented a departure from the City's practice of only designating heritage properties with the owner's consent. Mr. Dinsmore objected to the proposed designation, triggering a hearing before the Conservation Review Board.

At the hearing, city officials presented evidence supporting the designation of the two buildings on both historical and architectural grounds. Mr. Bill Cockshutt, a grandnephew of the founder of the Cockshutt Plow Company and a representative of the Canadian Industrial Heritage Foundation, also supported the proposed designation. Mr. Dinsmore did not dispute the heritage significance of the buildings but expressed concern about the loss of valuable salvageable materials. The property owner did not participate in the hearing.

The Cockshutt family, who were involved in the company from its inception in 1877 to the time when it was purchased by the White Motor Corporation in 1961, is considered to be one of Brantford's founding families. The family's association with Brantford began in 1832 when Ignatius Cockshutt came to the then village to establish a grocery business. One of his sons went on to become a Member of



Willowbank – Cockshutt timekeeping building
Photo: Stephen Robinson

Parliament and another Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Many local institutions that serve the community to this day, including the Brantwood Residential Development Centre, the Glenhyrst Art Gallery and Gardens, the YMCA and Farringdon Church, benefited significantly from the family's generosity.

It was James Cockshutt, a son of Ignatius, who, with five employees, started the Brantford Plow Works in 1877. The company was incorporated as the Cockshutt Plow Company in 1882. When James died in 1885, at the age of 32, other family members took over the company reins. By 1903, the company had moved to its new location on Mohawk Street and had 900 employees on its payroll. It reached its peak during World War II when it employed 5,000 workers engaged in producing aircraft parts, grenades and other equipment for the war effort.

The Cockshutt Plow Company owed its success to the development of a steady stream of innovative farm equipment. James Cockshutt invented the J.G.C. Riding Plow, a three-wheel single furrow plow that a farmer could ride. Another innovation, the tiller combine, allowed prairie farmers to minimize tillage and conserve soil. In 1946, the company

began production of the first tractor wholly made in Canada, the Model 30. The Model 30 was the first farm tractor to offer live power take off that allowed farm machinery to operate independently from the tractor, greatly improving agricultural productivity. In 1985, Canada Post commemorated the Model 30 with a postage stamp.

The three storey office building was constructed in 1903 when the company moved to its Mohawk Street location and it retains many of its original exterior features. The entire building, including the rear section that had been used as a warehouse, has corbelling below the roofline. Corbelled bricks demarcate the three floors on the front façade. The front façade features a triple arch frontispiece with stone drip moulding with a carved name stone in the centre arch. The windows have stone sills and transom bars. The front main entrance consists of a brick and stone enclosure with a stone entablature and a brick parapet. The triangular peak of the parapet has stone coping and a carved namestone.

The timekeeping building, which was constructed in 1912, was modeled on the much larger office building and features three rounded arches springing from a stone string course that extends across

the entire façade. The centre arch also contains a carved namestone. The brick parapet is similar to that of the office building's porch but with two steps leading to a rectangular top.

In May, 2002 the City received the hearing report from the Conservation Review Board. The Board recommended that the Cockshutt Buildings be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. While the Board noted that the buildings had suffered from neglect, it expressed the view that they were recoverable. Brantford City Council considered the Board's report and in July voted to proceed with the designation of the buildings.

Matthew Reniers

Matthew Reniers, MCIP, RPP, is Manager of Policy Planning & Heritage for the City of Brantford.

Lost Buildings Report

A report on the loss of heritage properties in Ontario was released this April. Research for the study was directed by Professor Robert Shipley at the University of Waterloo, with funding provided by the Trillium Foundation. The study is the result of a partnership between the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Community Heritage Ontario and the Ontario Heritage Foundation.

The following is taken from the executive summary.

Purpose and Goals of Study

Scope of the Study

- Approximately 9000 properties in 22 communities were investigated
- This may be the largest study of its kind ever undertaken in North America
- Communities representing a quarter of Ontario's population from the largest cities to smallest towns were involved
- 34 volunteers and many municipal employees contributed to the work

Major Findings of the Study

- Ontario communities continue to lose significant numbers of heritage buildings
- Since 1985, 433 buildings have been lost in a sample of 22 communities
- The rate of loss of historic buildings in different communities varies dramatically:
 - some places have lost 1 in 5 of their historic buildings
 - other locations have saved all of the structures identified as significant
 - some places have lost over 200 times more heritage buildings than other types
- In many communities it is difficult to determine what is being lost because very few heritage buildings have been given any sort of recognition
- Designated buildings make up 13% of the lost buildings while listed buildings make up 65% of the losses (designated means formally recognized under the Ontario Heritage Act Parts IV or V while listed means identified by the community as having heritage significance but not yet formally recognized under legislation)
- The places that have suffered the highest losses are, not surprisingly, among the municipalities with the greatest development pressure
- Larger communities (populations over 25,000) are losing more heritage buildings than smaller places
- Unsympathetic development is the dominant reason for the loss of listed buildings while fire, neglect, and vandalism join development as significant reasons for the loss of designated buildings
- The rate of loss of historic buildings appears to have declined since the last period for which any sort of measure is available
- this may mean that legislation designed to save heritage buildings is working effectively, at least in some places
- on the other hand many significant historic sites were already demolished before the period examined in this study

Conclusions

- Even when recognized as historically significant, buildings can be and are being demolished
- Designation under the Heritage Act appears to provide more protection than simply recognizing significant historic buildings by placing them on a list
- The absence of consistent and standard approaches to designation and creating

Great Heritage Cartoons



"This is Mr Trimp from the Town and Country Planning Department. He's here to demonstrate the proposals for the old town"

Editor's Note: Great Heritage Cartoons is a regular feature of ACORN. Please submit your favourite cartoon on a heritage or preservation issue. This issue's cartoon is by Peter J. Larkham (from Conservation and the City, New York: Routledge, 1996: 265) and is provided courtesy of Sharon Vattay.


- lists of historic structures hinders good planning and identification and the systematic collection of data
- Some communities have minimized the loss of their heritage buildings while other communities suffer high loss rates
- Some form of financial assistance, tax relief or other measures, that recognizes the value of heritage structures to the community, might make them less vulnerable to re-development and to the neglect that leads to fire and vandalism

Recommendations

- Elected representatives and municipal staff (planners, buildings inspectors and others) should be encouraged to learn more about and how to apply the tools available for conservation and preservation. These include:
 - demolition control
 - property standards
 - heritage conservation easements
 - Part 11 of the Ontario Building Code
 - better use of official plans, plans of subdivision and zoning to protect buildings

- There needs to be more encouragement for designation of significant buildings. More information and education should be given to building owners about the advantages of designation. Legitimately identified significant buildings should be designated with or without the owner's consent
- There needs to be a standard system for listing buildings. This could be accomplished by:
 - amending the Heritage Act provisions on listing buildings
 - the Minister issuing guidelines under the current Act
 - sharing best practices from successful municipalities with the places where loss rates are more alarming
- Citizens should encourage Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments to:
 - Take advantage of the current provisions to provide financial assistance to heritage property owners (as in Hamilton and London)
 - Pursue the current proposals under the Ministry of Canadian Heritage – Historic Place Conservation Initiative and the Ontario Ministry of Culture – Heritage Property Tax Relief Program

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